

Minnesota Veterans' Home Complex, Ten-Stall Garage  
5101 Minnehaha Avenue South  
Minneapolis  
Hennepin County  
Minnesota

HABS No. MN-74-M

HABS  
MINN,  
27-MINAP,  
19-M-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HABS  
MINN,  
27-MINAP,  
19-M-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MINNESOTA VETERANS' HOME COMPLEX,  
TEN-STALL GARAGE

74-M  
HABS No. MN-74M

Location: 5101 Minnehaha Avenue South, Minneapolis,  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

USGS St. Paul West Quadrangle, Universal  
Transverse Mercator Coordinates: Zone 15;  
483960:4973380; 484140:4972680; 483640:4973140

Present Owner: State of Minnesota.

Present Occupant: Part by Park Police Department, and other part by  
Minnesota Veterans' Home.

Present Use: Storage.

Significance: The Ten-stall Garage was originally built for  
car storage in 1925, but presently it is being  
used by the Minneapolis Park Police to store  
their motorcycles. It is a rectangular structure  
with ten doors. It can take ten cars.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of Erection: 1925.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: Minnesota Veterans' Home.
4. Builder, Contractor, Suppliers: The contractor is not known.
5. Original Plans and Construction: Not available.
6. Alterations and Additions: None.

B. Historical Context:

Franklin Steele hired Ard Godfrey in 1847, a millwright from Maine to build a sawmill at St. Anthony Falls. This undertaking was very successful and because of this, in 1852, Ard Godfrey had a claim made out to him by Captain Monroe of Fort Snelling which included the present site of the Soldiers' Home complex. He had a mill and a house built in about late 1853 at the mouth of the Minnehaha Creek. Ard Godfrey started to improve this mills, he built a port at the mouth of the Creek and the Mississippi River. This served as a landing for the boats coming in through the Mississippi River to St. Anthony Falls. This was later known as Godfrey Point in 1866. Ard

Godfrey owned the vast majority of the land in this area and between 1871 and 1883, he began to sell the land in small plots. In 1883, the Minnesota Parks Commission was formed and what makes up the present day Soldiers' Home was acquired.

In 1887, when Minnesota began to look into the problems facing its veterans, an agreement was reached by the Legislature that a Home should be provided for these veterans. The construction was authorized by the Legislature. This was to provide a shelter for veterans and their immediate families. This present site was then selected. The home is located on a peninsula surrounded by the Mississippi River on the east and Minnehaha Creek on the west side in Minneapolis. Work actually started in 1888. The Ten-stall Garage was built to store cars. This garage has ten openings, and is a rectangular structure. Part of this garage is now being rented out to the Park Police Department who use it to store their motorcycles. The remaining space is being used to store old building materials by the Minnesota Veterans' Home.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The Ten-stall Garage is a one-story structure, built of wood and the floor has no concrete on it. Instead of concrete, pieces of slabs were put in place.
2. Condition of the Fabric: The Ten-stall Garage is structurally unfit. It has a leaking roof, and both the exterior and interior fabric has fallen apart.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The Ten-stall Garage is on the northwest corner of the paint shop and garage. The combined dimensions are about 100' x 18'.
2. Foundations: The wooden structure is laid on the ground. I could not find any concrete footings supporting the structure on the site.
3. Walls:
  - a. North Elevation: The north facade is solid wood. It is a bearing wall of wood with no windows.
  - b. South Elevation: The south facade is a replica of the north facade.

MINNESOTA VETERANS' HOME COMPLEX,  
TEN-STALL GARAGE  
HABS No. MN-74-M (Page 3)

- c. East Elevation: The east facade is mostly openings to the garage which has ten doors.
- d. West Elevation: The west facade is a massive wall which faces the creek. It has no openings in it.
- 4. Structural System, Framing: The east division has load bearing wooden walls with timber posts and beams structured system.
- 5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and Doors: The east facade has ten doors at the street level. The door is 6'10" x 7'9" and is made of wood. When open it slides into the ceiling.
  - b. Windows: It has no windows.
- 6. Roof: It has a low pitch roof. Roofing material is asphalt shingles.
- C. Description of Interior:
  - 1. Floor Plans:
    - a. Typical plan: The garage is a massiave space. There is no division inside it.
  - 2. Flooring: The flooring is done with small concrete slabs.
- D. Site:
  - 1. General Setting and Orientation: The Ten-stall Garage was built as a care storage place. The site rises in elevation from the river side. The garage can be approached from both the north and the south side, the main entry on the east side.
  - 2. Other buildings in the complex:
    - a. Domiciliary Building No. 1 (1888).
    - b. Domiciliary Building No. 2 (1888).
    - c. Domiciliary Building No. 4 (1891).
    - d. Domiciliary Building No. 5 (1891), foundation only.
    - e. Domiciliary Building No. 6 (1905).

- f. Main Dining Room No. 7 (1902).
- g. Domiciliary Building No. 9 (1936).
- h. Administration Building No. 10 (1892).
- i. Storage Building (1921).
- j. Laundry No. 13 (1891).
- k. Power House No. 14 (1937).
- l. Paint Shop and Garage (1899).
- m. Carpenter Shop No. 12 (1950).
- n. Infirmary-Clinic No. 16 (1973).
- o. Residential Care No. 17 (1977).
- p. Chapel Auditorium No. 15 (1962).

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

#### A. Bibliography:

##### 1. Books:

Bezat, Barbara and Alan K. Lathrop. Drafting a House History. Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1979.

Bullock, Orin. The Restoration Manual. Norwalk, Connecticut: Silvermine Publishers, 1966.

Fitch, James. Historic Preservations: Cultural Management of the Built World. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982.

History of Hennepin County. Warner. North Star Publishing, 1881.

##### 2. Publications:

Ellsworth, Linda. The History of House, How to Trace It. Nashville, Tennessee: American Association for State and Local History, 1976, Technical Leaflet No. 89.

History Procedures Manual. Historic American Buildings Survey.  
Washington: National Parks Service, 1983.

Green, Russell R. Minnesota Veterans' Home. Minnesota  
Historical Society, UB 384. M6G73.

3. Miscellaneous:

Minneapolis Historical Society Audio-Visual Library-Photograph  
Collection.

Minneapolis History Collection, Minneapolis Public Library.

8. Original Architectural Drawings: Architectural drawings for the  
original building were not found. However, plans for remodeling  
drawn by Jacobson & Jacobson Architects were in the boiler house.  
These plans were undated and looking at the plans closely, the  
remodeling was never carried out.

Prepared by:  
Felix Okotete  
University of Minnesota  
April, 1988

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was prepared as a class project for Architecture 5143,  
Historical Building Research and Documentation, a class offered in the  
School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of  
Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The class project was prepared under  
the direction of Professor Foster W. Dunwiddie in cooperation with the  
State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society,  
Saint Paul, Minnesota. Historical data was compiled by Felix -O- Okotete,  
University of Minnesota, April, 1988.